

To: Szaro, Deb[Szaro.Deb@epa.gov]; Spalding, Curt[Spalding.Curt@epa.gov]
From: Enck, Judith
Sent: Tue 3/22/2016 1:28:43 PM
Subject: FW: News Clips (PFOA)

From: Rodriguez, Elias **On Behalf Of** Region2 PAD News
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2016 9:02 AM
To: R2 EPA Region 2 (EPA Staff) <R2_EPA_Region_2_EPA_Staff@epa.gov>
Subject: News Clips (PFOA)

Carbon filters come to 20 North Bennington homes affected by PFOA

By Mary Wilson

March 21, 2016, 11:13 pm

NORTH BENNINGTON, Vt. (NEWS10) – Many North Bennington families will soon have clean tap water as the state expands its testing for PFOA.

Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin announced on Monday that eight more wells in North Bennington are contaminated with the chemical PFOA. He said there could be more because the state is expanding its testing.

But many families will soon have clean tap water that is paid for by Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics. Twenty carbon filters have been installed in North Bennington homes, and 84 more are scheduled for the week.

The Ridley family had a carbon filtration system installed in their home over the weekend.

"I still have doubts about drinking the water because it still hasn't been tested," Robert Ridley said.

A few weeks ago, the couple learned their water had some of the highest contamination levels in the village – more than 100 times the amount of PFOA the state considers safe.

"I said, 'Is that really 2,200?' He said, 'Yes,' and I said, 'Good thing we aren't drinking the water now.'"

The Ridleys live about one-quarter mile from the old ChemFab plant. It can be seen through the trees in their backyard.

"We were cheering when it closed down," Ridley said. "We were like, 'Whoa, yeah, it's gone. That bad smell.' Little did we know underlying it all there was something creeping on us."

PFOA has been linked with cancer, and it has caused Ridley to question his health issues.

"Geeze, I've been healthy as a horse, and then all of these things started happening, and I was like, 'Wow, maybe this is related to it,'" he said.

Despite being scared for their well-being, the couple said they're happy with Vermont's response, including a PFOA information center. The center was busy on Monday. The state Department of Environmental Conservation fielded questions from 25 people.

The Ridleys still have questions and fears, but they said things are moving in the right direction.

"I can't overemphasize what they have done so quickly, and you kept hearing so many horror stories about what was happening in Hoosick Falls, and they did all those things," Ridley said.

The Ridleys said they'll continue drinking the provided water they know is safe until their tap water is tested again and proves the new filtration system is working. In the future, they hope to be connected to the municipal water supply.

New North Bennington PFOA testing numbers released

By WRGB Staff Monday, March 21st 2016

NORTH BENNINGTON, VT--Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin has just released the numbers from the final round of testing in North Bennington for PFOA that's believed to have come from the old Chemfab plant in town.

Of the 43 new results received, eight private wells showed PFOA levels above the Vermont Health Department's advisory level of 20 parts per trillion.

Those eight ranged from 25 parts per trillion to 241.

185 wells have now been tested and 104 of those are above the advisory level.

Levels are generally highest closest to the plant.

It's important to note, these are private wells and the public water system shows no sign of PFOA.

WPTZ

More wells test positive for PFOA, sampling area expands

104 residential wells now considered contaminated by toxic chemical

UPDATED 2:30 PM EDT Mar 21, 2016

BENNINGTON, Vt. —More than 100 residential wells in North Bennington have now tested positive for the chemical PFOA.

Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin announced the latest results of lab testing on Monday.

Of the 185 residential wells tested, 104 were contaminated with perfluorooctanic acid. Eleven wells showed traces of the chemical under the state's minimum contamination threshold.

The initial 1.5-mile testing area around the former Chemfab plant has been expanded to three new areas northwest and southwest to the New York state line and southeast of the original site.

According to the Department of Environmental Conservation, the areas around the former plant were most impacted. Homes in the area with municipal water have not been affected.

Shumlin said officials took water samples from three sources in nearby Pownal. Residents were concerned about the water quality because of their proximity to the former Warren Wire Plant.

The DEC said there was no reason to believe the plant contributed to PFOA contamination. Results from the tests were expected in one to two weeks.

Residents continue to be notified about the status of their water. The DEC continues to provide bottled water and was installing water filtration systems at affected homes.

Bottled water remains available for residents to pick up at the North Bennington Village Variety Store at 9 Route 67 West. It was also being delivered to affected homes.

Two water tankers from which residents can draw water were located across the street from the former Chemfab plant at the intersection of Water Street and Route 67A. Water treatment systems were also being offered to affected residents.

A state information office is also open at 324 Main St.

Sen. Patrick Leahy met last Friday with affected residents during a visit. He said he planned to push federal legislation to help prevent water contamination like that in Bennington.

Gov. Shumlin provides update on North Bennington water contamination

By Ali Stewart

March 21, 2016, 10:12 pm

MONTPELIER, Vt. (NEWS10) – Gov. Peter Shumlin provided the following update on the situation in North Bennington where a number of private wells are affected by PFOA

contamination.

North Bennington Water Testing Results: The final round of well samples within the 1.5 mile radius around the former Chemfab plant were received on Sunday. Of the 43 new results received, eight private wells showed PFOA levels above the Health Department's advisory level of 20ppt. The latest results range from 25 ppt to 241 ppt. Two samples had detections below 20ppt and 33 samples did not detect PFOA. In total, approximately 185 water samples have been taken to date. Of the wells sampled, 104 were above 20ppt, 11 were less than 20 ppt, and 63 wells did not detect PFOA. The results generally show levels of PFOA closest to the former Chemfab plant. The 1.5 mile radius has now been expanded in three areas (map: <http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/PFOA.htm>). Additional testing of the North Bennington public water system, including samples from the elementary school, have confirmed no PFOA contamination.

Bottled Water & Treatment Systems: Point of Entry Treatment systems are being offered to impacted residents and are being paid for by Saint-Gobain. Thus far, 20 systems have been installed. The remaining 84 installations for impacted home owners are being scheduled this week. Bottled water remains available at the North Bennington Village Variety Store, located at 9 Route 67 West, and is being delivered to impacted homes. Two water tanks from which residents can draw water are located in the parking lot across from the former Chemfab plant located at the intersection of Water Street and Route 67a.

Testing on Northside Drive: The former Chemfab facility had its original location in Bennington on Northside Drive. The overwhelming majority of individuals in this area are on municipal water, which has been tested and is not impacted by PFOA. DEC took a water sample from one private well on Northside Drive. Results show levels of PFOA above 20ppt. The family has been alerted and bottled water is being delivered. A municipal hook up is available at this site. DEC is working with Bennington officials to review well data to determine if there is any other well sampling that needs to be done in the immediate area in the immediate future.

Pownal Water Sampling: Based on concerns from local residents, three water samples have been collected from the Pownal Fire District #2 system, which is located 1,000 feet from the former Warren Wire Plant #1. DEC has no reason to believe this source is affected by PFOA contamination but has taken samples out of an abundance of caution. Results from this sampling are expected within one to two weeks.

Notifying Affected Residents – The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) continues to notify residents of test results on an ongoing basis, and is coordinating the installation of water treatment systems. The Health Department is also reaching out by phone to residents who have just received test results.

Information Center – An information center remains open at the Vermont Department of Health offices located at 324 Main Street and will be open from 8am-6pm Monday-Friday this week. Officials from DEC and Health will be on hand to answer follow up questions from residents.

New Hampshire Union Leader

March 18, 2016 11:27PM

Preliminary testing of Merrimack water samples reveals chemical in 2 private wells

By KIMBERLY HOUGHTON

Union Leader Correspondent

MERRIMACK — Two families are being provided with bottled drinking water from the state Department of Environmental Services after preliminary test results showed evidence of perfluorooctanoic acid in their private wells.

James Martin, public information officer with DES, said his agency decided to provide bottled water to all homes where the initial test results detected more than 100 parts per trillion of perfluorooctanoic acid, or PFOA.

Although three private wells detected PFOA above 100 ppt, two of the wells are on the same property, explained Martin. The double wells sit on one location in Litchfield, and that family began receiving bottled water on Friday; one of those wells detected about 350 ppt of PFOA, however that well is used primarily for farm animals, he explained.

A separate private well in Merrimack detected about 820 ppt of PFOA, and that family has been notified and is already receiving bottled water as well, according to Martin.

DES began investigating Merrimack's water after the Saint-Gobain plastics plant noticed low levels of PFOA at four faucets within its Merrimack plant about three weeks ago. Chronic exposure to PFOA, a man-made chemical once used to make Teflon, has been linked to a myriad of medical problems, including kidney cancer, testicular cancer and other illnesses.

"The wells that tested the highest were closest to Saint-Gobain on the map," he added.

On Friday, the preliminary test results from additional water samples were shared by state officials.

Test results from the Merrimack Village Water District, which supplies public water to about 25,000 local residents, revealed levels of PFOA ranging from 17 to 90 ppt, according to Martin.

Bottled water will not be provided to MVWD customers since the test results were below 100 parts per trillion, he said.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency has not set an enforceable drinking water standard for PFOA under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. EPA's Office of Water has, however, established a provisional health advisory of 400 ppt for PFOA for short term exposure.

Martin explained that the EPA is expected to release a new lifetime health advisory level this spring, or in the near future, but he has not been informed of what that number might be.

In the meantime, DES will offer bottled water to any residents that have private wells detecting above 100 ppt, an amount determined following a review from health risk assessors, scientific data and water health guidelines now in place for Maine, said Martin.

Officials stressed that this was the first round of water testing, and that additional tests will be conducted.

Last week, environmental activist Erin Brockovich and the law firm Weitz & Luxenberg announced that it will begin looking into the Merrimack water problem, just as it has in other communities in Petersburg, N.Y., North Bennington, Vt., and Hoosick Falls, N.Y. The same firm recently filed a class-action lawsuit against Saint-Gobain and Honeywell International over water contamination in those areas. Locally, public meetings have been scheduled for next week to review the water test results. Those meetings will take place at 7 p.m. Wednesday at James Mastricola Upper Elementary School in Merrimack, and at 7 p.m. Thursday at Litchfield Elementary School in Litchfield.

- See more at: <http://www.unionleader.com/Preliminary-testing-of-Merrimack-water-samples-reveals-chemical-in-2-private-wells#sthash.rBkpGuUb.dpuf>

Last week, environmental activist Erin Brockovich and the law firm Weitz & Luxenberg announced that it will begin looking into the Merrimack water problem, just as it has in other communities in Petersburg, N.Y., North Bennington, Vt., and Hoosick Falls, N.Y. The same firm recently filed a class-action lawsuit against Saint-Gobain and Honeywell International over water contamination in those areas. (Abaca Press/2014 MCT FILE)

March 19. 2016 8:06PM

Merrimack water: Families anxious over well contamination

By DOUG ALDEN

New Hampshire Union Leader

If you go...

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, state Division of Public Health Services, Towns of Merrimack and Litchfield will be holding public information meetings concerning the state's investigation into water contamination.

The Merrimack meeting is 7 p.m. Wednesday at the James Mastricola Upper Elementary School, 26 Baboosic Rd., Merrimack.

The Litchfield meeting is 7 p.m. Thursday at the Litchfield Middle School, 19 McElwain Dr., Litchfield.

MERRIMACK — Nancy Vanier was surprised when the state Department of Environmental Services last week tested the well her parents, Frank and June Church, have used for decades. The Church's small home sits surrounded by trees on a hill above the Saint-Gobain plastics plant.

Vanier was stunned and frightened after she learned the test results: Samples indicated high levels of a synthetic chemical used in manufacturing products such as non-stick cookware and

weather-resistant clothing.

"It's kind of unpleasant knowing that," Vanier told the New Hampshire Sunday News on Saturday, a day after a woman from DES dropped off six gallons of bottled water for the family to start using as potable water.

The chemical is called perfluorooctanoic acid, or PFOA, which Vanier knew little about and was anxious to learn more, especially after the warning came with the gallon jugs.

"She told me yesterday, don't brush my teeth with (the well water), make coffee with it or drink it," Vanier said outside her parents' home off Daniel Webster Highway.

It was especially alarming for Vanier to think what effects the contamination could have on her parents. Frank Church is 95 and still limited from a stroke, while June is 91.

Vanier, who lives in Maine and often travels home to check on her parents, said it was her mother who actually called to have the family's well tested. June Church had heard about tests happening in the area after low levels of PFOA were detected at the Saint-Gobain plant, just across the road on the banks of the Merrimack River.

While samples from the Merrimack Village Water District showed slight amounts, three private wells in the area were significantly higher, DES said Friday. James Martin, a DES spokesman, said he was not able to release the addresses or names of the residents because of privacy concerns.

One was the Churches' and the two others were on a single property in Litchfield. Of the Litchfield wells, one is used primarily for livestock.

Darlene DeBlois, owner of Dar-Col Stable, confirmed Saturday that the Litchfield wells were on her property. Her horse stables off Charles Bancroft Highway offer boarding, training and riding instruction.

DeBlois said outside one of her barns Saturday that she had only just learned of the DES results and didn't want to comment until she knew more about PFOAs and the potential dangers.

According to the law firm of Weitz & Luxemberg, which has filed a class-action lawsuit against Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics and Honeywell International over PFOAs, chronic exposure to the chemical has been linked to a myriad of medical problems, including kidney cancer, testicular cancer, thyroid disease, ulcerative colitis, pregnancy-induced hypertension and high cholesterol.

The DES release Friday stated that PFOA is a perfluorochemical, or PFC, and that "all people have some level of PFCs in the blood." According to the state, the relation of low levels of PFCs and many of the ailments cited by Weitz and Luxemberg, including cancer, were not well understood.

Weitz & Luxemberg is working with environmental activist Erin Brockovitch on the suit on behalf of residents in Hoosick Falls, N.Y., after discovering they were drinking water containing high levels of PFOA. Their investigation into PFOA now includes Merrimack, Petersburg, N.Y. and North Bennington, Vt.

"We are aware of the recent water test results in New Hampshire, many of which are alarmingly high," said Jane Hardey, a spokesman for the law firm. "We will be attending the upcoming meetings to hear from and hopefully talk with residents about their concerns and assess the short- and long-term health and economic impacts of this issue."

Martin said PFOA is an unregulated chemical, meaning the federal Environmental Protection Agency has not set an enforceable standard for acceptable levels in drinking water.

"Public water systems are not required to test for it," Martin said.

However, the EPA has established provisional standards of 400 parts per trillion. Samples from the Water District ranged from 17 to 90 parts per trillion, but the wells at the Litchfield stables and the home of the Churches in Merrimack showed levels concerning enough that the state delivered bottled water to both properties.

Martin described the move was made "out of an abundance of caution" as testing continues.

Word quickly spread last week on both sides of the river about potential contaminants coming from the factory. Public meetings are scheduled Wednesday at James Masticola Upper Elementary School in Merrimack and Thursday at Litchfield Middle School. Both are at 7 p.m.

Merrimack resident Tracey Rutherford, who lives in a house down the hill from the Churches, is planning to attend the Wednesday meeting to learn more about PFOA and what is going on with the drinking water. Although her home has its own well, Rutherford said it is also connected to the village water system and she doesn't use the well.

Nonetheless, Rutherford said she and her family are taking precautions.

"It's still a concern," Rutherford said. "Until we know more about the situation, even though we're on town water, I am definitely using bottled water at least for drinking."

- See more at: <http://www.unionleader.com/Merrimack-water:-Families-anxious-over-well-contamination#sthash.66QH3QK.dpuf>

NEW HAMPHIRE PUBLIC RADIO

DES Broadens Water Investigation After High Levels of PFOA Found in Three Wells

By Rick Ganley & Michael Brindley

23 hours ago

Public meetings will be held in Merrimack and Litchfield this week, where state environmental officials have been investigating chemical water contamination.

Results released by the Department of Environmental Services late last week showed high

levels of the chemical perfluorooctanoic or PFOA, in three private wells.

A meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Wednesday at the James Mastricola Upper Elementary School in Merrimack. Another meeting will be held 7 p.m. Thursday at Litchfield Middle School.

Jim Martin, spokesman for the state Department of Environmental Services, joined Morning Edition for an update on the situation.

Can you explain more about the testing DES conducted and what you found?

We went out and sampled 12 wells. Four of those were Merrimack Village Water District wells; the rest of the wells were private drinking wells within a certain vicinity of the Saint-Gobain plastics plant in Merrimack. Some of those wells were across the river in Litchfield. We expedited the results of those wells to find out what was in the wells as soon as possible.

All of the wells tested had PFOA in the water. Several of the wells were above 100 parts per trillion. The Environmental Protection Agency has set a provisional health advisory for PFOA at 400 parts per trillion, which is sort of a short-term exposure; people drinking water at that level for a short period of weeks to months. There is no lifetime health advisory on drinking PFOA right now. Out of an abundance of caution, DES provided homeowners whose wells tested above the 100 parts per trillion with bottled water.

So you're waiting to get some guidance from the EPA. In the meantime, what's being done about what you found in Merrimack and Litchfield?

Once we got the test results back on Thursday, DES decided we were going to go out and do further drinking water well sampling in Merrimack and Litchfield area. We had staff out on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday collecting further drinking water samples. When it's all said and done, we'll have over 100 private water well samples collected. We anticipate getting those results back within 10-12 days. That will help us to know what the extent of contamination of drinking well water in that area may be.

It is possible that blood tests could be made available to residents in Merrimack and Litchfield who may be concerned?

I don't have any information on blood testing at the moment.

PFOA has been detected in the water supply at Hoosick Falls, New York, and in some wells in North Bennington, Vermont, also near Saint-Gobain plants.

Is the state exploring whether Saint-Gobain is at fault in any way?

We are working with Saint-Gobain on the situation.

Your office is saying the health effects of prolonged exposure to this chemical are not well understood, but in New York, health officials there say human studies have shown associations with increased PFOA levels in the blood and adverse health effects, including kidney and testicular cancer.

Some are saying DES is downplaying the health effects. It seems like there's some conflicting

information, so what do we really know about the health risks of this chemical and how do you decide when it's time for people to use bottled water?

There are some studies out there that indicate those health risks that you mentioned. There are also other studies out there that show an inconsistent relationship to those health risks. The Department of Environmental Services, out of an abundance of caution, decided to provide bottled water to the two families whose wells tested above 100 parts per trillion. That standard that we decided on was based on some peer reviewed scientific studies from neighboring states, the state of Maine.

We are advising people that if they are concerned, they can use charcoal filtration on their water. We will have more information on systems that they can use posted on our website. People can also use bottled water until they get more information from us at the meetings on Wednesday and Thursday night.

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